

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 FREETO 02890 081251Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 NEA-10 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 DODE-00 /069 W
-----012313 081550Z /41

R 081112Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6113
INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 2890

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, PGOV, NI, SL

SUBJECT: SIERRA LEONE ATTITUDES TOWARD NIGERIA

REF: STATE 208244

1. SINCE THE MILITARY COUP IN 1967, WHICH PREVENTED PRESIDENT STEVENS AND HIS APC PARTY FROM TAKING OVER THE POWER THEY LEGITIMATELY WON IN AN OPEN ELECTION FOR NEARLY EIGHTEEN MONTHS, THE GOSL HAS NOT LOOKED FAVORABLY UPON ANY MILITARY REGIME IN AFRICA. NIGERIA IS NO EXCEPTION. STEVENS AND THE GOSL LOOK FORWARD TO A RETURN TO POWER IN NIGERIA OF A CIVILIAN-DOMINATED GOVERNMENT.

2. DESPITE THIS PROCLIVITY, STEVENS AND HIS GOVERNMENT HAVE TRIED IN EVERYWAY POSSIBLE TO WOO THE NIGERIAN REGIME AND ON THE SURFACE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO ARE EXCELLENT. UNDERNEATH, THE SIERRA LEONEANS ARE JEALOUS AND ENVIOUS OF NIGERIA'S WEALTH AND POWER AND DISAPPOINTED WITH NIGERIA'S LACK OF GENEROSITY. SIERRA LEONE DESPERATELY HOPES NIGERIA WILL FUNNEL SOME OF ITS OIL WEALTH INTO ASSISTANCE TO SIERRA LEONE. BUT DESPITE TWO "HAT-IN-HAND" TRIPS TO NIGERIA BY STEVENS TO MEET WITH GENERAL OBASANJO, THE RESULTS SO FAR HAVE BEEN NIL. SIERRA LEONE HOPES NIGERIA WILL SELL IT AND
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 FREETO 02890 081251Z

OTHER AFRICAN "BROTHERS" OIL AT CUT-RATE PRICES. IN THIS IT HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTED AS WELL AS IN ITS HOPES THAT NIGERIA WILL ACT AS AFRICA'S ADVOCATE WITH OPEC FOR CONCESSIONARY PRICES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

3. NEVERTHELESS, THE GOSL RECOGNIZES THAT NIGERIA IS A GIANT IN COMPARISON TO MOST COUNTRIES IN AFRICA DN IT IS

CAREFUL TO KEEP ITS DISAPPOINTMENTS WELL MASKED. NIGERIAN-SIERRA LEONE RELATIONS ARE ALWAYS PRAISED AND THE NIGERIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS EASY ENTRY TO POWERFUL PERSONALITIES NOT ACCORDED TO THE GHANAIAI HIGH COMMISSIONER, WHO UNFORTUNATELY IS A RETIRED COLONEL IN THE GHANAIAI ARMY AND NEVER LETS ANYONE FORGET IT. TECHNICIANS IN GOSL ARE AWARE THAT NIGERIA IS PAYING A LION'S SHARE FOR SUCH ACTIVITIES AS ECOWAS, WEST AFRICAN CLEARING HOUSE, WEST AFRICAN COUNCIL OF PHYSICIANS, ETC., AND DO NOT BEGRUDGE NIGERIAN PREDOMINANCE IN THESE SPECIALIZED ACTIVITIES. SOME POLITICIANS ALSO SEEM GRATEFUL TO HAVE NIGERIA AS A COUNTER-BALANCE TO WHAT THEY PERCEIVE TO BE STRONG FRENCH-DOMINATED FRANCOPHONE STATES SUCH AS IVORY COAST, GABON, AND SENEGAL.

4. SIERRA LEONE JEALOUSLY GUARDS ITS POLITICAL INDEPENDANCE HOWEVER, AND PROBABLY WOULD NOT EASILY ACCEPT NIGERIA ACTING AS SPOKESMAN FOR AFRICA UNLESS POSITIONS TAKEN BY NIGERIA WE SANCTIFIED BY OAU HEADS OF STATES OR COORDINATED BILATERALLY. VIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FREETOWN, NIGERIA SEEMS TO HAVE FOLLOWED A PRUDENT COURSE IN THIS RESPECT. AT LEAST WE KNOW OF NO INSTANCE WHERE SIERRA LEONE HAS BEEN UPSET BY NIGERIA'S PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS. ON THOSE PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE BY NIGERIA CONCERNING SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES, THE GOSL SEEMS TO BE IN FULL ACCORD. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT WERE NIGERIA TO ATTEMPT TO ENNUNCIATE FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS, APART FROM SOUTHERN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 FREETO 02890 081251Z

AFRICAN ISSUES, WITHOUT SOME FORM OF CONSULTATION OR COORDINATION WITH GOSL, THIS GOVERNMENT IS PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF TELLING NIGERIA TO SPEAK FOR ITSELF.

LINEHAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 08-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977FREETO02890
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770325-0721
Format: TEL
From: FREETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770987/aaaacvnh.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c575aa4a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 208244
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1351872
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SIERRA LEONE ATTITUDES TOWARD NIGERIA
TAGS: PINR, PGOV, NI, SL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c575aa4a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009